



TITLE:

# An Ethnosemantic Analysis of |Gui Relationship Terminology

AUTHOR(S):

ÔNO, Hitomi

---

CITATION:

ÔNO, Hitomi. An Ethnosemantic Analysis of |Gui Relationship Terminology. African study monographs. Supplementary issue 1996, 22: 125-144

ISSUE DATE:

1996-12

URL:

<https://doi.org/10.14989/68373>

RIGHT:

## AN ETHNOSEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF !GUI RELATIONSHIP TERMINOLOGY

Hitomi ŌNO  
*Reitaku University*

**ABSTRACT** This paper reconsiders !Gui relationship terminology by means of a lexical semantic and ethnosemantic approach based on data the author gathered through field research and illustrate how !Gui people classify their contemporaries. Upon review of the literature, new terms are introduced and classified into reference terms and address terms. Next, reference terms are grouped into a sextet of category terms and the range of meanings in each category is clarified. The !Gui terms are distinctive with respect to generation and restrictions on sexual behavior, and the model of !Gui's classification of people is given.

**Key Words:** Khoisan; Khue; !Gui; Relationship Terminology; Extra-Marital Sexual Relationship

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, anthropological studies have been conducted on !Gui [g|úí] and !lGana [g|lana] people from social and ecological points of view. Anthropologists, such as Silberbauer (1981), Tanaka (1978b, 1980, 1989) and Barnard (1980, 1989, 1992) have also investigated their kinship system.

The studies have provided us a general picture of the !Gui kinship system, but the linguistic/semantic analysis of kinship terminology has not been accomplished. Lexical items of previous studies were probably gathered according to a questionnaires prepared beforehand to collect "kinship terms." Terms which designate consanguineous kin may seem easy to collect according to such a "questionnaire," but through field research I found a number of inconsistency in the data provided by Silberbauer, Tanaka and Barnard. Some of such inconsistency may be due to the lack of a reliable method of phonetic transcription in previous studies. But others were so crucial that they require serious reconsideration of the whole kinship system of !Gui.

When we get a set of lexical items sharing a semantic field, we must define each of them to understand how they are differentiated from each other: Needless to say, a word in a language may not exactly correspond to a word in *our* language. The range of meanings covered may not always be the same with that of *our* word. Kinship terms are no exception. If a researcher should gather terms by asking "How do you call such-and-such people" according to the genealogical knowledge of himself, it would be quite natural that his attempt to clarify the "kinship terminological system of a people" would result in gathering the words for translating his own kinship terms. The important thing is not to seek equivalents to *our terms* but to define *their terms*. In order to understand their

terminology system from their own way of thinking, that is, in order to understand !Gui logic for classifying people, we must avoid easily translating !Gui terms into our own. For this reason, it is not only valid but necessary to define the contrastive features and positional values of respective terms as they constitute a distinct semantic field. Although this procedure is similar to the method of cognitive anthropology or lexicography in ethnoscience, it has never been attempted for !Gui kinship terminology.

Furthermore, although it has been said that !Gui people often marry (and divorce) more than once and that extra-marital sexual relations are common among them (Tanaka 1989, Sugawara 1993), how multiple sexual liaisons affects people's categorization has never been taken into account. Morphological difference among "kin terms" provided has never been considered, either.

As an anthropologist-structuralist, Barnard (1992) extensively compared the systems of kinship terminology among various Khoisan foragers and herders. He took into little consideration the inexhaustive nature latent in previous data and his procedure of determining a kin terminology system was based on the methodology of identifying "equivalents" to English kin terms (Barnard 1979), so the structure which he abstracted from the data does not withstand re-examination of the linguistic/semantic aspects of terminology in any Khoisan group.

The following data were collected through intensive interviews with several !Gui informants during two periods in 1993 and 1994 (total of about 4 months). English kinship terms are used in brackets as metalanguage to explain !Gui kinship (relationship) terms. Orthography follows Nakagawa (1996). Tone symbols are omitted.

## LITERATURE REVIEW OF !GUI KINSHIP TERMS

In this section I examine the recent lexical data of !Gui kinship terms from Silberbauer (1981), Barnard (1992) and Tanaka (1980) (Table 1).

To disregard orthographical difference that seems to have been caused by phonetic transcription, I shall focus on the difference that affect the interpretation of the kinship system as a whole: (1) the term for PPP and CCC (Silberbauer), (2) the terms for FB/MZ, BC, and (3) the terms for FZC/MBC.<sup>1</sup>

(1) the term for PPP and CCC

Silberbauer listed 'ba:' as the term which designates both <great-grandparent> and <great-grandchild>. Instead, my observation ascertained that the <generation senior to grandparents> is also designated by the same term as <grandparents>, and the same is true for the <generation junior to grandchildren>.

(2) the terms for FB/MZ

So far it has been reported that ego's <parents' same-sex siblings> are treated as ego's <parents>. More specifically, Tanaka (1980) interpreted "balu" as <parent-in-law> and Silberbauer (1981) interpreted "ba:lgwā" as <little father/little mother>. What is common for these interpretations is that FB/MZ form a classificatory category with P and are distinguished from FZ/MB. But I found that !Gui people sort <parents' same-sex siblings> into two different categories, by whether they are regarded as <elder or younger siblings> for ego's <parents>.

Namely, <parents' same-sex *younger* siblings> are categorized as 'llkoōlkoa'; but <parents' same-sex *elder* siblings> are categorized as 'ciallku', which also designates <grandparents>, <parents' opposite-sex siblings> and <great-grandparents>, as was mentioned above (see Fig. 1 and 2).

When we see these relationships from the <parents> point of view, ego's <same-sex siblings' children> are also subdivided. That is, ego's <same-sex *elder* siblings' children> are categorized as 'lkoā', which also means <ego's own child>, while ego's <same-sex *younger* siblings' children> are categorized as 'llnoori', also meaning <grandchildren>.

In this way, FB/MZ are classified according to the age difference between them and ego's <parents>, and BC (and ZC for female ego) are also classified according to the age difference between ego and ego's <siblings>. On this point, !Gui kinship terminology system is similar to eastern ǀHōā's (Gruber, 1973), in spite of the previous argument to the effect that eastern ǀHōā's kinship terminology represents "a structure not quite like any other Khoisan one" (Barnard 1992: 277).

As will be mentioned in the following section, the parallel device of dividing <parents' same-sex siblings> according to age difference is also noticeable in restrictions of <marriage> in the !Gui system.

### (3) the terms for FZC/MBC

Although <cross cousins> have been considered to form one category with <grandchildren> and <cross nephews and nieces> (see Table 1), my observation was quite different. !Gui terminology distinguishes <junior grand relatives> from <cross cousins>, and the term which designates <cross cousins> is 'ǀgoaǀo'.

Tanaka once listed "ǀdwao" as <cross cousin> and "ǀnodi" as <grandchild> and <niece and nephew> (Tanaka, 1978a), but he soon changed his interpretation of the word "ǀdwao" into "close acquaintances" (Tanaka, 1980). This confusion may have occurred because of the seemingly wider range of meaning covered by 'ǀgoaǀo'. In other words, interpretation varies according to where within this range the researcher seek the focal meaning. Signification of 'ǀgoaǀo' is discussed later.

## ADDRESS TERMS AND REFERENCE TERMS

I will briefly examine the distinction in usage between address terms and reference terms. Then, I shall focus on the reference terms, since it is presumed to form the basis of kinship terminology system.

Morphologically speaking, a number of !Gui nouns also serves as verbs, and all regular !Gui verbs have allomorphs which appear in verbal compounds (Nakagawa, 1993). We can easily examine whether a word is used as a verb or not: In Table 1, terms of type 1 are used as verbs or nouns and terms of type 2 are used only as nouns. In addition, there is a lexical difference between types 1 and 2: terms of type 1 have gender distinction at the level of lexicon, while terms of type 2 do not.

Since they are grammatically and lexically different, it is reasonable to hypothesises that type 1 and type 2 may also have semantic difference. This hypothesis

**Table 1.** IGui Kinship Terms For Male Ego

Silberbauer (1981)		Barnard (1992)	Tanaka (1980)	Ōno		
				Type 1	Type 2	
PPF	ba:			cia  ku	paaba	ciasao
PPM	ba:			cia  ku	maā	ciasiri
PF	baba	baba	baba	cia  ku	paaba	ciasao
PM	mama	mama	ma	cia  ku	maā	ciasiri
F	ba:	ba	ba	koō	baa	sao
M	gie:	ma	gjei	koō	gyie	siri
FB	ba:glwā	ba	ba u	{ cia  ku	paaba	ciasao (F's elder B)
				{   koō koa	baa koa/baa	sao koa (F's younger B)
MZ	gie:glwā	ma	gje u	{ cia  ku	maā	ciasiri (M's elder Z)
				{   koō koa	gyie koa/gyie	siri koa (M's younger Z)
MB	baba	baba	baba	cia  ku	paaba	ciasao
FZ	ma:	mama	ma	cia  ku	maā	ciasiri
B, Z (elder)	gijaxu	gijaxu	kiyaxo	uo — ciexo		
(younger)	gjbaxu	gjbaxu	dabaxo	gyibaxo		
C	glwā	ua	wa	koā		
CC	n  odi	n  oodi	n!odi	noori		
CCC	ba:			noori		
ZC	n  oodi	n  oodi	n!odi	noori		
BC	glwā	ua	wa	{  koā (elder brother's child)		
				{   noori (younger brother's child)		
FZC, MBC	n  odi	n  oodi	n!odi	‡goa?o		
FBC, MZC	gijaxu	gijaxu	kiyaxo	uo — ciexo		
	gjbaxu	gjbaxu	dabaxo	gyibaxo		

P=parent F=father M=mother B=brother Z=sister C=child

Gender/number/case markers are omitted

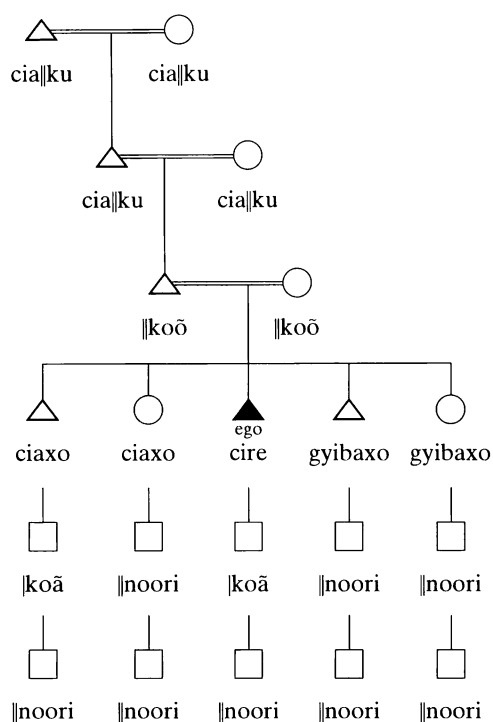


Figure 1. IGui Kinship Terms 1

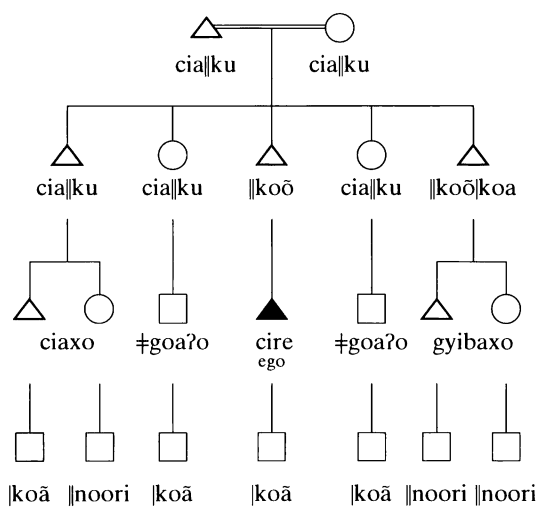


Figure 2. IGui Kinship Terms 2

was supported by my observation of their usage, which is summarized in Table 2.

The terms 'sao' (for male) and 'siri' (for female) can be paradigmatically replaced with 'lkoō', since '-lku' is an allomorph of 'lkoō' used in a compound as a second element (Nakagawa, 1993; Ōno, 1995). This special variation is used only to refer to hearer's <kins>.

In usage, terms of type 2 are used more often than terms of type 1 to call and address people. For referring to people, terms of type 1 have more variations (two as verbs and one as nouns) than terms of type 2 (just one as nouns).

This analysis enables us to conclude that types 1 are address terms and type 2 are reference terms. Hereafter I shall only deal with reference terms.

Among these nine lGui reference terms, 'uo', 'ciaxo' and 'gyibaxo' form hyponymy, in that 'ciaxo' and 'gyibaxo' are a pair of hyponyms of 'uo'; and both 'lkoō' and 'lkoōlkoa' are in relational oppositions to 'lkoā'. They form only 4 types of dyadic relationships as follows:

two different generational relationships:

'ciallku'-to-'lnoori' relationship; 'lkoō (lkoa)'-to-'lkoā' relationship

two same generational relationships:

'Ɂgoaʔo'-to-'Ɂgoaʔo' relationship; 'uo'-to-'uo' relationship

Considering this, we can organize these nine terms into a sextet categories (Table 3).

**Table 2.** Usage of lGui Kinship Terms

	type 1		type 2	
	lkoō		baa	sao
	lkoōlkoa		baa(lkoa)	sao(lkoa)
	ciallku		paaba	ciasao
to call speaker's~	±		+	-
to refer to speaker's~	+	>	+	-
to refer to third person's~	+	>	+	-
to refer to hearer's~	-		-	+

+: possible    -: impossible  
±: partly possible: possible for ciallku  
but impossible for lkoō and lkoōlkoa  
> means that left side has more variations than right side

**Table 3.** lGui Reference Terms and Kin Categories

lGui reference terms	generation	lGui kin category	generation
ciallku	senior	ciallku	senior
lkoōlkoa	senior	lkoō (lkoa)	senior
lkoō	senior		
Ɂgoaʔo	same	Ɂgoaʔo	same
uo	same	uo	same
ciaxo	same		
gyibaxo	same		
lnoori	junior	lnoori	junior
lkoā	junior	lkoā	junior

In the next section I shall first describe the semantic domain of these terms, taking into account the rules that operate to determine the position of 'uo'. Subsequently I shall introduce the distinctive semantic features which differentiate the above categories from each other.

## DEFINING EACH <KIN> CATEGORY

Hereafter I use IGui nominative case markers when the distinction of sex is needed: '-si' as a female marker, '-bi' as a male marker, and '-khora' as a marker of a male-female pair. All <kin> categories are defined from the point of view of male ego.

### 'lkoõ'

I will start this section by defining 'lkoõ' ethnosemantically. IGui people often experience <marriage> more than once (Tanaka, 1989). In our societies, multiple <marriages> of <parents> result in a number of <step parents>, but how about in IGui society?

#### 'lkoõ-si' <Mother>

However many women ego's <father> may <marry>, there is only one <social mother ("mater")>, that is ego's <genetrix>. All the other <wives> of the <father> are 'lkoõlkoa' to ego.

For example, if a woman died soon after she gave birth to a baby, and if the <widower> should <marry> another woman, that dead woman remains a 'lkoõ-si' for the baby; and the new <wife> of the <father> is a 'lkoõlkoa-si' to the <child>.

IGui people precisely distinguish the one and only 'lkoõ-si' from a number of 'lkoõlkoa'. When a IGui calls more than one woman 'gyie,' the address term for <mother>, the question "Is she your 'gyie' or 'gyielkoa'?" makes sense and he can answer clearly and immediately. In other words, the address term 'gyie' is used for both ego's 'lkoõ-si' and 'lkoõlkoa-si'.

#### 'lkoõ-bi' <Father>

In determining <father>, as in the case of <mother>, a IGui has only one 'lkoõ-bi'. However, the procedure to determine ego's 'lkoõ-bi' is not as simple. 'lkoõ-bi' is determined from <mother>'s sexual relations.

It has been reported that there are two types of sexual relationships in IGui: 'seeku' and 'zaāku' (Tanaka, 1978b, 1980, 1989; Sugawara, 1991, 1993). As this paper is restricted to describing IGui labeling system, analyzing what differentiates 'seeku' from 'zaāku' is beyond the scope. Here I use as metalanguage for convenience <marriage> and <extra-marital sexual relationship> to designate 'seeku' and 'zaāku'.

There is a clear and practical restriction for women from making sexual liaisons with men. Women can have only one <husband> and/or only one 'zaā' at



once (For men, <polygyny> is allowed). This restriction for women functions well to keep only one <pater> for any baby beyond argument: when a woman becomes pregnant, the <husband> is automatically regarded as the <pater> for the unborn baby whether she has a 'zaā' or not.<sup>2</sup> When the woman does not have a <husband>, her 'zaā' is regarded as the <pater> for the baby. All other sexual partners of <mother>, both in the past and in the future, are recognized as 'lloōlkoa-bi' for the baby.

If an <unwed> woman, after pregnancy, separated from her 'zaā' to have a new 'zaā' before the baby's birth, the former 'zaā' remains 'lloō-bi', and the latter 'zaā' is 'lloōlkoa-bi'.

As in the case of 'lloōlkoa-si', 'lloōlkoa-bi' can be addressed by both 'baa' and 'baalkoa', but 'lloō-bi' is addressed only by using 'baa'.

Tanaka (1980) interpreted '-lkoa' as "in-law," partly because he confused it with 'l?ui', which is closest in meaning to <affine>, but I disagree. <Spouse's parent> is not 'lloōlkoa' but 'cialku'.<sup>3</sup>

#### 'uo'

As shown in Table 1, <siblings> and <parallel cousins> are categorized 'uo'. The pair of hyponyms, 'ciaxo' and 'gyibaxo', involves the contrastive semantic features <elder> and <younger>. 'uo' does not distinguish <elder/younger>.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, <half-siblings> and <step-siblings> caused by multiple sexual relations of <parents> are also classified as 'uo' for ego.

#### 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo'

In this section I will describe the rules and factors in determining the 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position among 'uo' people.

The 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position among 'uo' of a same <mother> is determined by the order of birth. The <child> who is born earlier is a 'ciaxo'. This goes for <twins> as well. In the case of <parallel cousins>, the 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position is decided according to the relative ages of ego's and alter's <parents> (Tanaka, 1980), and absolute age differences of individuals do not matter. That is, ego's <father's elder brother's children> are all labeled as 'ciaxo' for ego, and <father's younger brother's children> are all 'gyibaxo'. For both of these cases I use the conception of <senior/junior> corresponding to 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo'. If the <elder sister> <marries> a <younger brother> and the <younger sister> <marries> the <elder brother>, the <patrilateral> line takes priority in determining the position of <children>.

Among <half-siblings> of a same <father> and <step-siblings>, the order of the <parents'> partnership operates in deciding the 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position of <children>. For example, all of the <first wife's children> are <senior siblings> to all of the <second wife's children>. When a sexual relationship is held among people who have no 'uo' relationship (Figure 3), the position of <children> is defined as follows:

First, <children> are classified by their <mother>, namely, "<children> of A" and "<children> of C." The order that the men <married> each woman operates

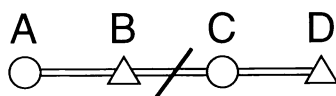


Figure 3. Pattern of Partnership: Marriages and Divorce

in determining the relative <senior/junior> position of <children>. In this case, if B first <married> C and then <married> A, then all of the <children> of C are regarded 'ciaio' to all of the <children> of A.

Sexual partnership may cease, but the 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' relationship of <children> that originated in the broken relations of the <parents> lasts forever. In Figure 3, the <child> of C whose <pater> is C's new <husband>, D, is also regarded as 'ciaio' for the <children> of A.

In relation to this rule, there are two restrictions which seem to help avoid conflict in determining the 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' position among 'uo' who are <half-siblings> or <step-siblings>.

First, although <polygyny> is allowed among IGui, when a man <marries> women who are 'uo', he must first <marry> 'ciaio-si', the <senior sisiter>, before 'gyibaxo-si', the <junior sister>, but not in reverse order.<sup>5</sup> He may <marry> both at once. For the <junior sister>, her <senior sister>'s <husband> could become her own <husband> in the future, but for the <senior sister>, her <junior sister>'s <husband> never becomes her own <husband>. Here we must remember that IGui distinguish ego's <parent's same-sex senior siblings> and <parent's same-sex junior siblings>. The former is categorized as 'ciallku', and the latter 'llkoõlkoa'.

Second, there is another parallel restriction in practicing <levirate and sororate>: <levirate and sororate> are allowed (but not a must) for only the 'gyibaxo' of the deceased, and only when the deceased had no <children>, the <senior siblings>, 'ciaio', of the deceased can practice <levirate/sororate>.

The rules applied to deciding 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' position among <children> are summarized as follows: When <mother> is shared, the 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' position is decided by the order of birth of the individuals. Otherwise, the position is decided by the relative ages of the ego's <parent> and the alter's when they are 'uo', or by the order that the <parents married>.

#### Relationship between <Children> Whose <Parents> Have 'ɰgoaʔo' Relationship

Silberbauer (1981) has pointed out that <cross cousin>'s <children> are also regarded <children> for ego, but he did not give any further information or any explanation for it. It follows that <ego's parent's cross cousin> should be regarded 'llkoõlkoa', and <ego's parent's cross cousin's children> should be regarded as 'uo' for ego, and it is indeed true.

<Cross cousin> relationship originates from the relationship in <senior generation> as in Figure 4. In this case, the relation among <grandparents>, who are opposite-sex-'uo', determines the 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' position of ego and the alter, namely, ego's <grandmother's younger brother's grandchild> is classified as ego's 'gyibaxo'.

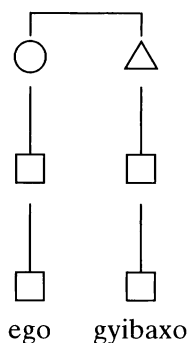


Figure 4. Pattern of UO Relationship

When the <cross cousin> relationship in ego's generation cannot be traced back to a definite <senior> generation, they do not distinguish 'ciaio' from 'gyibaxo', and just say that "X and Y are 'uo'."

Figures 1, 2 and 4 are abstract models, because they are illustrated without taking into account the existence of shifts which are given rise to by <marriages>. Actually, only the baby of a couple who are both classified as 'Ʇgoaʔo' for both ego and ego's <spouse> is considered ego's <child>.

#### Restriction on Sexual Behavior among People of 'uo' Relation

Tanaka (1980) pointed out that <marriage> between <siblings> and <parallel cousins> who are classified as 'uo' is seen as <incest>, and I have demonstrated above that a much wider range of people are labeled 'uo' for ego than has been thought. Here I argue that this definition of <incest> is applied to such a wide range of 'uo' people.

The two kinds of rules which operate in deciding the 'ciaio'/'gyibaxo' position mentioned above and such distinct verbal expressions as follows do exemplify that the |Gui distinguish various 'uo' relationship. When 'uo' relationship is based on common <parents>, |Gui say that "they are 'lʔao-sika uo' ('uo' by blood)" or "they are 'ʔaba-ku-sika uo' ('uo' by giving birth to)."

When 'uo' relationship is based on the <senior generation>'s relationship, "they are 'lʔaba-sika uo' ('uo' by tendon)."

Neither are behaviors observed among 'uo' people uniform. 'lʔao-sika uo' people neither <marry> nor have any sexual relationships. However, 'lʔaba-sika uo' people whose relationship originates from that of a senior generation may not clearly realize the boundary of the 'uo' relationship. In this case people actually <marry>.

The most curious point about the 'uo' category and <incest> is that in such cases where 'uo' relation of a couple who want to <marry> each other is vaguely suspected, the couple falls back on another interpretation that they are 'Ʇgoaʔo'. Since 'uo' people cannot <marry> or become sexually involved without such an convenient interpretation, I have concluded that having any sexual relationship among 'uo' people is prohibited in principle.

### ‘#goa?o’

Why has the term for <cross cousin> in IGui been so confusive? The word, ‘#goa?o’, has been introduced by Silberbauer and Tanaka as follows;

!dowao: people outside ... kinship sphere ... of the same age group (Tanaka, 1980: 104)

g#w’a’u: sister-in-law, potential wife (for male ego) (Silberbauer, 1981: 144)

I first came across ‘#goa?o’ as a term designating <cross cousin>, and later found that IGui people started to regard me, an outsider, as ‘#goa?o’. I interpreted this to be a forced analogy to express close friendship.

A clue to reconsidering the signification of ‘#goa?o’ was provided to me during a conversation with a IGui informant, NS.

#### example 1)

Ono: “Japanese people <marry> their ‘#goa?o’ (intended to mean <cross cousins>) when they want to, but it is rare.

NS: (being embarrassed) “Then whom on earth do they <marry>? Do they <marry> ‘uo’?”

The conversation above suggests that people are divided into ‘uo’ and ‘#goa?o’, at least among the same generation are concerned, where ‘uo’ cannot <marry> each other but ‘#goa?o’ can.

Taking account of the fact that IGui people do not always <marry> their <cross cousins> (they often <marry> sheer strangers) “#goa?o” does not always mean <cross cousin>. Another conversation between NS and I:

#### example 2)

NS: “When we see a stranger, we wonder if he may kill people or not. We approach him and ask, ‘Where are you from?’ Then, when he answers, we think, ‘Yes, people live there. This person does not kill people, he is the same human being as we.’ Then we accept him, and when he is as old as I, he is my ‘#goa?o’. When he is as old as my <parents>, he is my ‘ciallku’. When he is as old as my <children>, he is my ‘llnoori’. After this acceptance, when my ‘#goa?o’ has a ‘lkoā’ (<child>), I also will regard this ‘lkoā’ as my ‘lkoā’.”

This conversation shows <non-kinsmen> may become not only ‘#goa?o’ but also ‘ciallku’ and ‘llnoori’ for ego. Furthermore, the same is true of ‘llkoōlkoa’, ‘uo’ and ‘lkoā’ categories, which can be extended by way of ‘ciallku’, ‘#goa?o’ and ‘llnoori’ categories as was discussed above: for example, ego’s <parent’s ‘#goa?o’>s children> are classified as ‘uo’ for ego. Thus, IGui terminology system classifies people, including <non-kinsmen> and outsiders, into some distinct <kin> category, in so far as ego can specify an adequate label for each of them.

When a term is used to mean both “kin” and “non-kin,” it is possible to interpret that *this kin term is also used for some non-kin*. The interpreter then must explain the reason for the polysemy or metaphor. I do not adopt that interpretation and call IGui terminology system “relationship terminology” rather than “kinship terminology.”

Thus, ‘#goa?o’ category covers such relationships as “sister-in-law,” “potential

wife,” “close acquaintance” and “<cross cousin>,” investigated by researchers. I have concluded that ‘#goa?o’ is a label for people of the same generation with <marriageability>, in opposition to ‘uo’ category. <Marriageability> or, more generally, appropriateness in having sexual ties is the criterion in !Gui relationship terminology.

### WHAT DIFFERENTIATES SAME-SEX ‘uo’ FROM ‘#goa?o’ FOR EGO

In the previous section I have concluded that ‘uo’ and ‘#goa?o’ categories are distinctive as to <incest> or <marriageability>, irrespective of the point whether the person is ego’s <consanguineous kin> or not. In this section I shall describe what kind of sexual inhibitions are observed among same-sex ‘uo’ people.

Talking about sexual matters or exchanging obscene insults among ‘uo’ people is not allowed regardless of the participants’ sex, while such behavior is allowed and accepted as just joking among ‘#goa?o’ people. This is a clear contrast.

Another clear contrast is seen in the way ‘zaã’ relations are held between two <married> couples.

Tanaka (1989: 162) has pointed out that the significance of the ‘zaã’ relationship lies “in the uniting of two or more married families through sexual relationship” and in avoiding “the formation of miscellaneous groups of men and women practicing random marriage.” In addition, it is said that two !Gui couples can practice <mate-swapping> or <spouse exchange> (Tanaka, 1978b, 1989; Sugawara, 1991, 1993), and that a continuous and steady <mate-swapping> is regarded as an “ideal” relationship (Sugawara, 1991, 1993).

The crucial difference that is observed between an ordinary ‘zaã’ relation and <mate-swapping> is illustrated in Figure 5. As in (a) in Figure 5, an ordinary

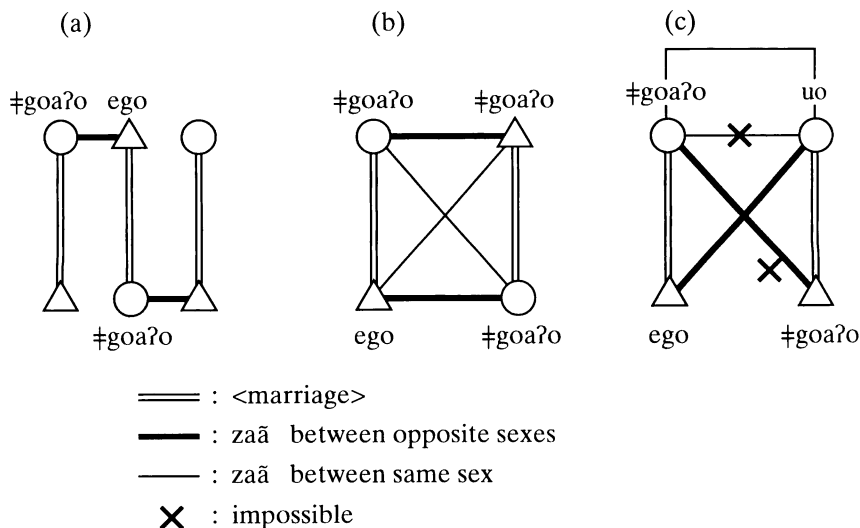


Figure 5. Patterns of Partnership

‘zaã’ relation involves a linear chain of relations. On the other hand, <mate-swapping> in lGui involves two <married> couples and forms a “closed circle” of relations like (b).

Furthermore, the closed circle relationship in (b) unites two <married> couples through not only the relation of opposite-sexes as in Tanaka (1989), but also through the same-sex members; that is, all four members are connected as a whole and call each other ‘zaã’, although there is no sexual relations among same-sex people.

However, this closed circle of relations has one restriction: this relationship can be realized only when all four participants are ‘#goa?o’ to each other.

This is indicative of the classification of ‘lkoã’ which I mentioned in previous chapter: the <child> of a couple who are ‘#goa?o’ to both ego and ego’s <spouse> is classified as ‘lkoã’.

This means, regardless of sex, ‘uo’ relationship renders it impossible for a closed circle of relations to develop. Sharing sexual partners among ‘uo’ people is not allowed, and thus ‘uo’ people cannot add ‘zaã’ relations to their connections.

This “mate-swapping” relationship has a peculiar feature in deciding the ‘ciaxo’/‘gyibaxo’ positions of the <children> of these two couples, not found in any other types of <extra-marital> relationships as in (a). As I mentioned before, the rules that are applied to decide the ‘ciaxo’/‘gyibaxo’ positions among <children> are summarized as follows: When <mother> is shared, the order of ‘ciaxo’/‘gyibaxo’ is decided by the order of birth of the individuals. Otherwise, the order is decided by the relative ages of the ego’s <parent> and the alter’s when they are ‘uo’, or by the order of the <parents’> sexual relations.

However, in the case of <mate-swapping> of two <married> couples as (b) in Figure 5, the ‘ciaxo’/‘gyibaxo’ positions of the <children> of the involved two women is determined by *the birth order itself*, as if they were borne by the same <mother>.

With the above, the sexual relationship among lGui that has been reported as <mate-swapping> can be interpreted as a <marriage complex> or <composite marriage> or at least <combined marriages> or <connected marriages>, although the distinction of <spouse> from ‘zaã’ remains. They usually live only with the <spouse>, and men visit their ‘zaã’.

Among same-sex ‘uo’, sexual joking and the peculiar closed circle of sexual relations are not allowed. In contrast, both of these behaviors are allowed or expected among ‘#goa?o’ people. Therefore, ‘uo’ category is pertinent to restrictions on sexual behavior, while ‘#goa?o’ category is not. This symmetrical system is illustrated in Table 4.

**Table 4.** uo and #goa?o

	generation	restriction on sexual behavior
#goa?o	same	impertinent
uo	same	pertinent

## WHAT DIFFERENTIATES PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

People of different generations to ego are also classified into two categories, as to whether they can engage in sexual behavior or joking with ego. As we have seen, within a generation all the people are classified into 'uo' and 'ʒgoaʔo'. Then, how is the opposition of 'uo'/'ʒgoaʔo' in a generation re-categorized when it is seen from the different generation?

Senior Generation: 'lkoõlkoa' and 'cialku'

The 'lkoõlkoa' category involves 'lkoõ's same-sex 'gyibaxo' and 'lkoõ's 'ʒgoaʔo' (<ego's parents' (potential) sexual partner of same generation>). Because 'lkoõ's same-sex 'gyibaxo' can be a <stepparent> by <levirate/sororate>, the possibility of becoming 'lkoõ's <spouse> is common among them. Namely, the 'lkoõlkoa' category indicates the sphere of *potential* <parents> for ego. At the same time, ego must refrain from sexual joking or having sexual relationships with people who belong to the 'lkoõlkoa' category (as with ego's <parents>), even if he has no close <consanguineous> relations with them.

'cialku' is a category which is impertinent to restrictions on sexual behavior. This category covers all people two generations above ego. Among adjacent generations, ego's <parent's different sex 'uo'> and ego's <parent's same-sex 'ciaxo'> are labeled as 'cialku', and they are the people with whom ego's <parents> never <marry>. When a 'cialku' talk about sexual or obscene matters to ego, ego may enjoy such talk as just joking.<sup>6</sup>

Junior Generation: 'lkoã' and 'lnoori'

'lkoã' and 'lnoori' are categories which have relational oppositions with 'lkoõ (lkoa) and 'cialku'. The 'lkoã' category covers ego's <children>, ego's same-sex 'ciaxo's <children>, and ego's 'ʒgoaʔo's <children>. In other words, this is a category for ego's own <children> and ego's *potential* <spouses' or 'zaã's' children>. Sexual behavior with people who are categorized as ego's 'lkoã' are not allowed as with ego's own <children>.

The 'lnoori' category covers ego's opposite-sex 'uo's <children>, ego's same-sex 'gyibaxo's <children>, and all the people two generations <younger> than ego. Ego can freely exchange sexual jokes with 'lnoori'. 'lnoori' category indicates the sphere of people with whose <parents> ego or ego's <spouse> can have sexual relations.

All lGui relationship categories are shown systematically in Table 5.

**Table 5.** lGui Relationship Categories

restriction on sexual behavior	pertinent	impertinent
generation		
senior	lkoõ (lkoa)	cialku
same	uo	ʒgoaʔo
junior	lkoã	lnoori

## A PROPOSED MODEL OF IGUI RELATIONSHIP CATEGORIES

Figure 6 is a model of IGui's classification of people, which is represented by using the "sphere" standing for a universe which consists of the people with whom ego can recognize the nature of relationship: There are people outside the sphere whom ego cannot identify or classify by means of the relationship terminology because of the lack of any "relation" with them. That means ego has not become acquainted with or has not accepted them. However, once IGui accept a stranger, IGui can incorporate them inside the "sphere" by way of 'ciallku', 'ʔgoaʔo' and 'llnoori' categories.

For IGui, all people are divided generationally, namely senior, same and junior generations, and into two categories as to the restriction on sexual behavior with ego. In the same generation, people are divided into 'uo' and 'ʔgoaʔo'. In the senior generation, people of more than one generation above are all 'ciallku', and the people of one generation above are divided into 'ciallku' and 'llkoõ (lkoa)'. There are only a male-female pair as <parents>, 'llkoõ-khora', and 'llkoõlkoa' are potential sexual partners for ego's 'llkoõ-khora'. Just as in the senior generation, for the junior generation, the people of more than one generation younger are all 'llnoori', and the people of one generation younger are divided into 'llnoori' and 'lkoa'. Ego must refrain from having sex with people who are classified into the dotted area in Figure 6. (Three small black balls stand for 'llkoõ-khora' and ego.)

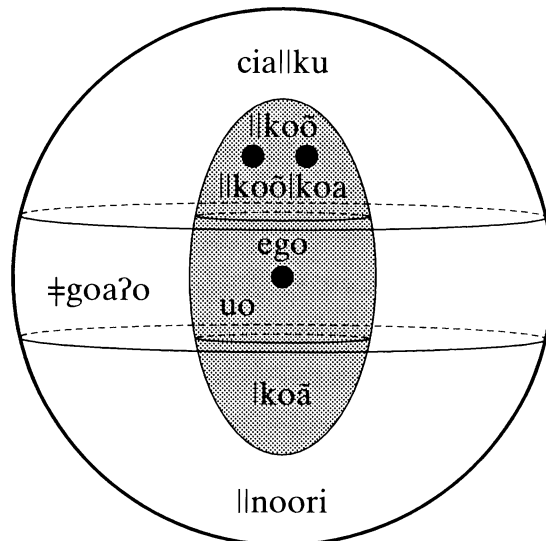


Figure 6. IGui Relationship Categories (Model)



## DISCUSSION

I have demonstrated that !Gui relationship terminology functions to classify the ego's contemporaries not rather than to relate the ego with the ancestral people through genealogy. As distinctive features which differentiate !Gui's sextet of relationship categories, I have elicited "generation" and "the appropriateness for sexual behavior", because sexual partnerships are among the variables that decide the nature of relationships of the people in next generations.

This paper does not aim to provide answer to the questions of as what differentiates sexual partnership 'seeku' from 'zaãku'; how <spouse's parents and siblings> are re-categorized as <affine>; and what shift occurs in intergenerational <marriage>. I would like to deal with these problems in the near future. Instead this study concentrates on describing the abstract models which show how sexual partnerships in senior generations determine the 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position of <children>: I would like to argue that <step-relations> and <half blood relations> resulting from multiple sexual relations play a considerable role in the models.

It is possible to point out that the !Gui relationship terminology categorizes <parents' potential spouses> as "classificatory <parents>"; <parents' potential spouses' children> as ego's "classificatory <siblings>"; and ego's potential <spouses' children> as "classificatory <children>"; and that ego is forbidden from engaging in sexual behavior, even sexual joking, with these people. In other words, !Gui relationship terminology works as a device to prevent sexual relations from being created among the people whose relationship originated from a sexual bond of a man and a woman (we call these people "a family") and who belong to the adjacent generation to the original couple. For example, a <father> and his <son>, or even his potential <step-son>, cannot have a common sexual partner, or a <son> cannot <marry> his <father's potential wife's child>. Such a wide range of 'uo' may seem to make the sphere where ego find his lovers and <spouses> narrower, but I view that this is the system that enable !Gui to practice multiple sexual relationships without causing conflict concerning breaking <incest taboo> between adjacent generations. In our society, step-siblings are also legally prohibited from marrying each other. But such a prohibition is invoked only after the parents marry. In !Gui, the striking difference is that people whose <parents> can have sexual partnership with ego's <parents> are categorized as 'uo' *beforehand*, regardless of whether their <parents> actually have sexual relations or not.

In reality, !Gui people not always grasp the nature of ancestral sexual partnership that the nature of their present relationship with people are based on. In addition, as connection with people gets vaguer, it gets harder to decipher the nature of relationship between ego and alter in relation to that of <ancestors>.

We must also consider the fact that not only <marriage> but also 'zaã' relations are memorized by people. 'zaã' relations of people are rather openly accepted and not hidden (Sugawara 1991, 1993). 'zaã' may even start with a prior permission from the <spouse>. 'zaã' couples can try to keep their relationship

secret, but !Gui people are expected to confess their sexual relationship to their own <children>, so, people's sexual relations are known at least to <children>. Thus, 'zaã' relations of <parents> create or confirm 'uo' relationship of <children>.

Therefore, if ego does not recognize any relationship with another, that means that no sexual relation existed between ego and alter's <parents>, and the ego and the alter can behave sexually free, namely as 'ʔgoaʔo'.

In this paper I refrained from using such terms as "avoidance/joking relationships," although my conception of the "sexual behavior restriction" in this paper corresponds to them. The serious disagreement between the interpretations of !Gui relationship terminology in the literature and mine is this: The relationship among the same-sex <siblings> and ego has been regarded as "joking," yet I propose it as the relationship in which sexual behaviors such as making sexual jokes and having a closed circle of sexual relations are forbidden.

The problem of a number of anthropological investigations has been to use kinship terminology in western concept, such as "consanguineous kin," "first affine," and "second affine," as parameters for analyzing !Gui people's behavior, and that "avoidance/joking relationships" have also been discussed without definition of each kin term. Thus, this work serves as a precursor to reconsider "avoidance/joking relationships" among !Gui people from their ethnosemantic point of view.

I would like to emphasize 'zaã' as a socially recognized behavior, and the 'zaã'-combined <marriages> have its place in !Gui society as an "latent form," because there is a definite marked rule deciding 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position of the <children> who have 'zaã' <parents> of this relation. The restriction on women's as to whether a woman can have a <husband> and /or a 'zaã' may reflect this "latent form." Although <polygyny> is allowed, — men either has one or two wives (Tanaka 1989) — having more than one 'zaã' at a time is regarded as a "immoral" behavior. Not only <spouse> but also 'zaã' are exclusive sexual partners. An <extra-marital> sexual relationship may hurt a partner, but it is not vilified socially as a mean affair because there is no violation of rule as long as it is practiced among 'ʔgoaʔo', and as long as 'zaã' relations are not exchanged at excessively short intervals.

Quite consistently, <children> suffer no discrimination as to their <status> in birth at all, such as <stepchild>, <love child>, <child of unwed mother>, or <child of divorced wife/husband>. Such difference never affect the category of <children>. However fiercely people roil at a partner's secret love affair, it never does spill over to the <children> who are borne by the affair, and all children are equally guaranteed to build relations with people around them. In this sense, !Gui are the very "egalitarian".

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Jiro Tanaka and Prof. K. Sugawara, Kyoto University, for giving me a chance to visit Xade area and their tolerant instruction for field reserch. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Prof. K. Sugawara and Dr. Lynne Murphy, University of the Witwatersrand, for correcting my English and useful comments.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The abbreviations are as follows. F: father, M: mother, B: brother, Z: sister P: parent C: child  
All terms are used for male ego.
- <sup>2</sup> When she has both a <husband> and a 'zaā' and the 'zaā' is regarded as the <genitor> of the baby, I do not know whether the <pater> and <husband> is not regarded as <genitor>, due to my lack of data on !Gui's ethnoscience of reproduction.
- <sup>3</sup> '-lkoa' in its primary function is a diminutive which adds the meaning "small" to nouns in compounds as a second element.
- ʔaba-lkoa      puppy  
dog-small  
!lnoori-lkoa    '!lnoori' who is young
- <sup>4</sup> 'uo' is also used to ask about general human relationships:  
"What kind of relationship do A and B have between each other?"  
How is A related to B?
- |          |             |             |                   |
|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| maāchana | A-bi        | B-ma        | uro-ha?           |
| How      | A-sg.m.nom. | B-sg.m.acc. | relate-be (state) |
- <sup>5</sup> After a man <marries> a woman, he is not allowed to <marry> her <junior sister>, but he can 'zaā' his <wife's junior sister>, although it is likely to make the <marriage> fall into a critical situation. In this case, in order to determine the 'ciaxo'/'gyibaxo' position among <children>, the women's side as <siblings> takes priority.
- <sup>6</sup> <Marriage> between 'ciallku' and '!lnoori' actually take place, but I do not have enough data to analyze such <marriage> at present.

## REFERENCES

- Barnard, A. 1980. Kin terminology systems of the Khoe-speaking peoples, in J. W. Snyman (ed.), *Bushman and Hottentot Linguistic Studies*, pp. 107–133, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- 1989. Nharo kinship in social and cosmological perspective: comparisons between Southern African and Australian hunter-gatherers, *Mankind*, 19 (3): 198–214.
- 1992. *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Gruber, J. S. 1973. †Hōā kinship terms, *Linguistic Inquiry* 4 (4): 427–449.
- Nakagawa, H. 1993. A preliminary report on the !Gui phonology and grammar (in Japanese). *Asia and Africa Bunko Kenkyuu* 22: 55–92.
- 1996. An outline of !Gui phonology, *African Study Monographs*, Supplementary Issue 22 (this volume): 101–124.
- Ōno, H. 1995. The system of kinship terminology of !Gui, the Central Kalahari hunter-gatherers, *Asia and Africa Gengo Bunka Kenkyuu* 50: 185–204.
- Silberbauer, G. B. 1981. *Hunter and Habitat in the Central Kalahari Desert*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Sugawara, K. 1984. Spatial proximity and bodily contact among the Central Kalahari San, *African Study Monographs*, Supplementary Issue 3: 1–43.
- 1991. The economics of social life among the Central Kalahari San (G//anakhwe and G//wikhwe) in the sedentary community at !Koi!kom. In (N.

- Peterson and T. Matsuyama, eds.), *Cash, Commoditisation and Changing Foragers* (Senri Ethnological Studies 30), pp. 91–116, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka.
- 1993. *Shintai no Jinruigaku* (in Japanese). Kawadeshoboo Shinsha, Tokyo.
- Tanaka, J. 1978a. *A San Vocabulary of the Central Kalahari: G//ana and G/wi Dialects*. African Language and Ethnography VII, ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo.
- 1978b. *Sabaku no Kariudo*. Chuuoo Kouronsha, Tokyo.
- 1980. *The San Hunter-Gatherers of the Kalahari: A study in Ecological Anthropology*. University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo.
- 1989. Social integration of the San society from the viewpoint of sexual relationships. *African Study Monographs*, 9 (3): 153–165.
- Accepted July 30, 1996.

Author's Name and Address : Hitomi ŌNO, *Reitaku University, Kasiwa 277, JAPAN*